

UNESCO! M'Bow! Pow!

Americans have properly jumped with glee at the news that the U.S. will pull out of UNESCO at the end of this year. But do try to spare a thought for the poor souls left behind in the mudpit UNESCO has become.

They are in the clutches of Director-General Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, a leading proponent of "new international world orders" in economics and communication and much, much more. His efforts to fetter the free press finally succeeded in turning even the most liberal Western news media into critics of his Paris-based playpen. The U.S. decided to sail down the Seine into the sunset because UNESCO "has exhibited hostility toward the basic institutions of a free society, especially the free market and the free press." But Mr. M'Bow, merrily spending a whopping \$374 million budget, deserves attention for more than just his affronts to human freedom.

The Senegalese director-general has stamped his anti-Western views onto every cog in the UNESCO machine. Robert's Rules don't count. Among his tricks is refusing to translate key documents when some big issue is before the house. Owen Harries, who recently represented Australia at UNESCO, concluded in a Heritage Foundation study that "with an assured majority behind him; with enormous patronage to dispense in the form of well-paying jobs, grants to governments and agencies, travel to conferences in glamorous cities, membership in innumerable study groups; with a large and intimidated Secretariat to carry out his commands, M'Bow is indisputedly the boss in UNESCO."

A poll of UNESCO employees showed that only 3% thought the group recruited well-qualified people and based promotions on merit. We suspect that among those voting aye

were 12 Soviets employed by UNESCO who were kicked out of France as KGB spies by President Mitterrand in 1982. Three of those were on Mr. M'Bow's personal staff. Although they can't live and work in France, he hasn't fired them. In fact, he gave them raises.

Western delegations complain of a \$2 million slush fund Mr. M'Bow uses to get friendly people into jobs and keep others in line, the money he allocated against the rules to bring 25 delegations to the general conference, and the fact that he appointed a relative (his wife's cousin) as personnel director.

Mr. M'Bow's "New World Information Order" gets more staff attention than dull topics like literacy, famine and infant mortality. He entrusted a NWIO commission to former Irish Foreign Minister Sean McBride, who, as winner of both a Nobel Peace Prize and a Lenin Peace Prize, passes for nonaligned in the UNESCO world. In fact, Mr. McBride is as aligned as they come. He's loudly pro-PLO, a darling of Radio Moscow and, as contributor John Train brought to our attention, gets top billing in a publication called Le Bulletin d'Information sur l'Intervention Clandestine. This is the French version of Philip Agee's publication that blows the cover of CIA agents, jeopardizing their lives.

One of the straws that broke the American backing, representing a quarter of the UNESCO budget, was continued U.N. insistence on boosting the agency's funding when all other U.N. organizations had frozen theirs. Other Western nations we leave behind in UNESCO can continue paying the bills if they wish. But development aid will be better accomplished through other public and private means. And continuing to wink at the highhanded antics of Amadou Mahtar M'Bow carries the paternalistic indulgence some Westerners exhibit toward products of the Third World to a ridiculous extreme.